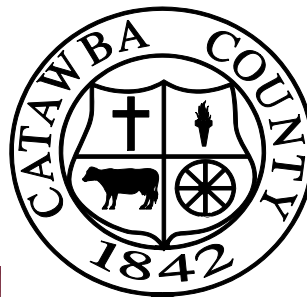


CATAWBA COUNTY

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2002



“Keeping the Spirit Alive Since 1842!”

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INTRODUCTION

The Catawba County Planning and Development Department has prepared its Annual Report for 2002. In this report you will find numerous activities and projects that the department has been involved with over the past year. The last year has proved to be very busy for staff and has enabled us to begin some new projects, progress on several on-going projects and complete others as well. The department is broadening its scope of services by placing a greater emphasis upon an analysis of existing housing conditions as well as targeting grant opportunities to enhance the quality of life for County residents. We are evaluating the County's set of land development regulations and its impact upon travel and tourism, community and economic development and the environment. The Board of Commissioners adopted the first of seven Small Area Plans in October 2002. Three other Small Area Plans are anticipated to be adopted this fiscal year. The recommendations being proposed by the Small Area Planning Committees, when adopted, will guide Catawba County's growth over the next several years.

To learn more about the Department's activities and accomplishments please review the enclosed report. We also welcome you to contact the Catawba County Planning and Development Department at (828) 465-8380 or refer to the County's web page at:

www.co.catawba.nc.us

Sincerely,

Jacky Eubanks
Director of Planning and Development

SMALL AREA PLANS

The process for developing small area plans is a grassroots community planning effort. There are four active Small Area Planning Committees whose members were appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The committee members are interested citizens who live or have land in the small area planning regions and volunteer their time to develop a small area plan for their community. The Committee also consists of a Planning Board member who serves as liaison to the Board. The County Planning staff and a consultant educate and assist committees in the development of individual plans. During the process of developing its plan, the committee solicits input from citizens in the planning area about how they see their community developing in the future, using a 10-20 year planning period.

In developing the plan, the committees address seven issues: 1) land use and community design; 2) transportation; 3) community facilities and public services; 4) housing; 5) economic development; 6) natural resources; and 7) cultural resources.

The plans, when adopted, will establish policy on how the area will develop. In order to implement the plan, ordinance amendments and rezonings must be approved through another set of public hearings.

Following is an update of the development plans for the four districts in progress.

Mountain View – plan adopted by Board of Commissioners October 21, 2002

The Mountain View SAP committee began its work in March 2000. The committee sponsored a community input meeting in June 2000. Approximately 179 citizens attended to provide their future vision for the Mtn. View area. The main issues presented at this meeting were concern over annexation by the City of Hickory, preservation of the rural character including Bakers Mountain, rapid commercialization of Hwy. 127 and the desire for increased residential improvements.

Based on input received from the community meeting, the committee formulated plan recommendations which were presented to the public in November 2001. After the committee made its plan recommendations, the Planning Board conducted a public hearing in February 2002. Upon hearing public comments about limiting density on Bakers Mountain, the plan was modified. The Planning Board made its recommendation for the plan in May 2002. Subsequently, the Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing in August 2002. After this hearing, the Board directed staff to prepare amendments addressing five issues: 1) housing affordability; 2) Bakers Mtn. Protection District; 3) corridor enhancement; 4) mixed uses; and 5) higher density development along corridors with water/sewer. The Board of Commissioners conducted a second public hearing on October 21, 2002 and adopted the plan with amendments addressing these five issues.

Following are highlights of the adopted plan:

- Extensive residential rezonings – the plan recommends that approximately 54% of the study area be rezoned to R-1 which only permits stick-built homes. In defining the area proposed to be rezoned, the committee chose existing stick-built subdivisions, a buffer

around the existing subdivisions, the proposed high-density areas and the Hwy. 127 corridor.

- Higher residential density is proposed in an area abutting Hickory's planning jurisdiction where existing residential subdivisions have been developing with half-acre lots and where public waterlines are located or are proposed along major corridors (Hwy. 127, Hwy 10, etc.). The high-density area would allow for lots to be half-acre without public water or 15,000 square foot lots with public water. In these areas, it is proposed that the current school capacity requirement be released. The rest of the district would remain in two-acre lot sizes.
- High-density developments could be clustered with a minimum 25% open space preservation requirement with a sliding scale up to 50% with higher density bonuses.
- Low-density developments would be required to develop a cluster subdivision with open space being preserved along the road frontage.
- New developments would be required to have additional setbacks, landscaping, and/or berms and limited driveways to promote privacy and aesthetics. Sidewalks would be required along the road frontage of major thoroughfares.
- Recommendations for future commercial/mixed use areas include a mixed-use corridor along Hwy. 127, a neighborhood commercial node at Hwy. 127/10 and a rural commercial node at Advent's Crossroads. The plan supports the current mixed-use designation at the River Road interchange on Hwy. 321 which would allow for commercial, multi-family and office-institutional uses. Industrial uses are recommended only at the northeast quadrant of the Hwy. 321 interchange at River Road.
- The plan recommends establishing corridor standards for the Hwy. 127 area to address driveway access, landscaping, parking and signage.
- A Bakers Mountain Protection District is designated which requires a planned development approval process for proposed subdivisions located higher than 1100 feet on the mountain. These standards would address clearing limits based on slope, lot sizes averaged at one house per two acres, height restrictions and architecturally compatible building materials.
- The plan recommends that a recreation/open space plan be developed to link the Hickory's Henry Fork Regional Recreation Park and the County's Bakers Mountain Park.

Sherrills Ford/Lake Norman

The Sherrills Ford/Lake Norman SAP began its work in January 2000. In order to obtain citizen input for the plan's recommendations, the committee conducted a telephone survey and sponsored a community meeting in August 2000. The community meeting was attended by 135 citizens. The top issues identified by the public included limiting commercial development, concern over a sewer plant in the area, stricter zoning regulations, minimizing multi-family and industrial development and retention of the small town atmosphere.

The committee reviewed the current conditions for the seven topics and then began developing specific plan recommendations. Upon preparing draft recommendations, the committee presented its plan to the public in April 2002. Following this meeting, the committee forwarded its recommended plan to the Planning Board. A public hearing was held by the Planning Board in June 2002 with subsequent recommendation to the Board of Commissioners in August 2002.

It is anticipated that the Board of Commissioners will conduct a work session and public hearing on the plan recommendations in early 2003.

Following is a brief description of the Sherrills Ford plan recommendations:

- Massive residential rezonings – the committee is recommending that approximately 77% of their district be rezoned. Approximately 21% is proposed to be rezoned to R-3, which allows for doublewide manufactured homes and stick-built homes and 56% to be rezoned to R-1, which does not allow any type of manufactured home. This would leave 7.5% as R-2, which allows for singlewide, doublewides and stick-built homes. The committee's basis for the rezonings is that the area is in proximity to the lake and Charlotte where stick-built homes are being constructed. Also, the past historical preference for the area has been for R-1 zoning.
- Higher residential density is proposed along Sherrills Ford Road where there is public water and along the lakefront where the current development pattern is denser. The recommended density along Sherrills Ford Road is one-half acre lots with three-quarter acre lots recommended within 1000 feet of the lake. Within these areas, the committee recommends releasing the current school capacity requirement; however, they also want to see impact fees implemented to help fund future facilities. The rest of the district would remain in two-acre lots.
- Development standards for the higher density residential development would include a 30% open space requirement and additional setbacks from the road.
- Recommendations for future commercial areas include a regional commercial district in an area encompassing the future and existing Hwy. 150/16 intersections. Smaller scale commercial districts are recommended for the intersections of Mt. Pleasant Road/Hwy. 150 and Hwy. 16/Bufalo Shoals Road and at rural crossroads such as Sherrills Ford Road and Long Island Road. A village area is recommended at Terrell which would include a combination of mixed residential and neighborhood commercial uses similar to that being developed north of Conover on C & B Farm Road. Multi-family and office institutional uses are recommended along the Hwy. 150 corridor. No additional industrial uses are recommended beyond the existing industrial zoning.
- The committee recommends corridor development standards for Hwy. 150 similar to the existing standards for the Hwy. 321 corridor.

St. Stephens/Oxford

The St. Stephens/Oxford committee was appointed by the Board of Commissioners in early 2001. The committee sponsored its community input meeting on May 3, 2001 where seventeen (17) people attended. The main issues presented were preservation of rural character/farmland, lack of public water/sewer, rapid housing on small lots and lack of long-range planning.

The committee developed its plan recommendations and presented them to the public at a community review meeting held in September 2002. The committee reviewed comments received from this meeting and subsequently recommended the plan at its October 30, 2002 meeting. Joint meetings and public hearings with the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners will take place in early 2003.

Following are highlights of the plan:

- Extensive residential rezonings – the plan recommends that approximately 60% of the study area be rezoned to R-1 which only permits stick-built homes. In defining the area proposed to be rezoned, the committee chose existing stick-built subdivisions, a buffer around the existing subdivisions, scenic corridors and a corridor along Hwy. 16.
- Higher residential density is proposed in the western half of the area. This would allow 2 units/acre without public water or 3 units/acre with public water. A minimum of 5% open space would be provided for high-density developments.
- Medium residential density is proposed in the south-central portion of the area. The density allowed would be .75-acre lot sizes with a minimum of 7.5% open space provided.
- Low residential density is proposed in the eastern portion of the area. This would allow one unit per acre with a 10% open space requirement.
- A Catawba River corridor is established with residential densities of one unit per acre and a minimum 100-foot lot width (compared to 75 foot currently). Cluster developments would be allowed but lots could be no smaller than .75 acre.
- Sidewalks in new high-density developments are recommended where there are at least 25 lots of ½ acre in size or smaller. Sidewalks would only be located on one side of the road.
- Recommendations for commercial/mixed uses include a commercial corridor along Springs Road. A mixed-use area is designated south of St. John's Church Road and South of Rock Barn Road. Smaller rural commercial nodes are designated at the intersections of Hwy. 16 with St. Peters Church Road, Springs Road and Swinging Bridge Road. Commercial nodes are also recommended at the intersections of Lee Cline Road/Houston Mill Road and Oxford School Road/Riverbend Road. A community commercial center is designated at the I-40 interchange of Oxford School Road.
- Industrial uses are recommended south of Oxford School Road at I-40 and south of I-40 between Rock Barn Road and North Oxford Street.
- Study the possibility of a multi-jurisdictional greenway along the Catawba River beginning at River Bend Park and extending downstream.

Balls Creek

The Balls Creek committee was appointed by the Board of Commissioners in early 2001. The committee held its community meeting on July 23, 2001 where twenty-eight (28) people attended. Many issues identified were similar to the St. Stephens/Oxford area including preservation of rural character and a desire for public water/sewer. Also addressed was a desire for quality public planning policy.

For the next 12 months, the committee developed its plan recommendations. The draft plan was presented to the public at a community meeting held in October 2002. The committee reviewed comments received from this meeting and made some minor amendments to the plan. Committee members will be meeting with the Board of Commissioners in early 2003 to review the plan recommendations. Public hearings on the plan are anticipated in early spring 2003.

Following are highlights of the plan:

- Extensive residential rezonings – the committee is recommending that approximately 71% of their district be rezoned. Approximately 13% is proposed to be rezoned to R-3, which allows for doublewide manufactured homes and stick-built homes and 58% to be rezoned to R-1, which does not allow any type of manufactured home. The basis for their recommended rezonings is to preserve the historical, scenic and rural character of the area and to facilitate the proposed mixed-use “village” area near the Abernethy Center.
- High residential density is proposed in the northern portion of the district. This area would allow .75-acre lot sizes. Development should have a landscaped buffer along the road frontage and be encouraged to preserve existing trees.
- A medium residential density is proposed in the central portion of the district. In this area, one-acre lot sizes would be allowed. Landscaped buffers and preservation of existing trees is also encouraged in this district.
- A low-density area is recommended in the eastern half of the district. This area was designated low density because of the number of active farms and the location of Anderson Mountain. Densities in this area would be one unit per two acres.
- A village area of mixed residential, commercial and office uses is noted in an area around the Abernethy Center. With future sewer and existing water, mixed uses could be supported for this area.
- Neighborhood commercial areas are noted at the intersections of Hwy. 16 with Mount Olive Church Road, Balls Creek Road and Buffalo Shoals Road. Also commercial nodes are identified at the intersections of Hwy. 10 with Bethany Church Road and Balls Creek Road. Smaller rural commercial nodes are designated at the intersections of East Maiden Road/Buffalo Shoals Road and East Bandys Road/Buffalo Shoals Road.

Copies of the adopted Mtn. View Plan and drafts of the other three plans can be found on the Planning Department’s web site at:

www.co.catawba.nc.us/depts/planning/small_area/main.html

The status of the three remaining Small Area Plans is as follows:

- 1) **Catawba Small Area Plan**, committee will hold its first meeting on January 14, 2003.
- 2) **Startown Small Area Plan**, is budgeted and will begin in late Spring 2003.
- 3) **Plateau Small Area Plan**, a request for funding will be in the 2003/2004 fiscal year budget.



TRANSPORTATION

Catawba County Transportation Plan

Staff from the Catawba County Planning and Development Department along with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, held public information forums to present and review a draft of an updated Catawba County Transportation Plan. The County's current Transportation Plan was adopted in 1992.

These forums were scheduled as informal, drop-in times for the public to review the draft plan. Staff members from the Catawba County Planning and Development Department and the North Carolina Department of Transportation were available throughout the scheduled time to explain the purpose of the transportation plan and to answer any questions.

The Transportation Plan is a long-range plan to address traffic concerns in Catawba County outside the urban areas of Hickory, Newton and Conover. Information available at these meetings included maps showing the proposed widening of NC Highway 150 and the Robinson Road extension project. Other items presented include proposed road improvement projects; bicycle plans, and proposed bridge replacement projects.

The new Transportation Plan will be presented to the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners during public hearings held in Spring 2003.



Bunker Hill Covered Bridge Grant

Planning staff provided technical assistance to the Catawba County Historical Association in their request for funding to improve public access at the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge historic site.

The federal highway bill of 1991, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), broadened government's transportation focus to include transportation enhancement activities. The funding, as continued under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century (TEA-21), improves the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of North Carolina's transportation system. One of the aims of this program has been to encourage communities to partner with the State of North Carolina to preserve treasures that can be enjoyed for generations.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) administers the TEA-21 project as a federal-aid transportation project. Transportation enhancement funding is a cost reimbursement program and not a grant. At least twenty percent of a project's cost must be paid for by the sponsor to show commitment by the local group or community. The Catawba County Historical Association has indicated that they would be willing to pay this required twenty percent for improving the public access to the historic Bunker Hill Covered Bridge site. They have identified this site as one that is in need of improvement and are applying for funding under the Historic Preservation category. Improvements include making the site pedestrian friendly and handicap accessible, improving the entrance, parking, walkway, fencing and signage for this structure and including it as a historical stopping point on the Catawba County Bicycle Mapping and Signing Project.

The Bunker Hill Covered Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, the American Society of Civil Engineers recognizes it as one of only three National Historic Civil Engineering Landmarks in North Carolina.

Notification of grant approvals from the State is expected in February 2003.



Bunker Hill Covered Bridge

VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT PROGRAM

In 2002, staff from the Planning and Development Department established a committee of interested citizens to draft a voluntary agricultural district ordinance. This was a result of a goal established by the Board of Commissioners to provide ways to assist farmers to stay in the agricultural business.

Authorized in North Carolina General Statutes, this initiative provides farmers that enroll with several benefits, including the ability to defer utility assessments on new water and sewer lines. In addition, it enables farmers to request a public hearing whenever condemnation proceedings are initiated on their farmland. It also authorizes counties to include a special notice in their property records system alerting future residential landowners that they are within half a mile of an agricultural area, helping to reduce the number of nuisance suits from new neighbors. Finally, agricultural districts help local farming communities improve their visibility and develop a sense of shared identity, building support for continued farming in the area. Currently 25 counties in the State have adopted voluntary agricultural district ordinances.

After the citizen committee developed a draft ordinance, it was presented to the Farm Bureau and Cattleman's Association to gauge their interest in such a program. Both groups agreed that this would be a benefit to them and encouraged the county to proceed with adoption of the ordinance.

Planning staff will be presenting the draft ordinance to the Board of Commissioners in early 2003 for its consideration and adoption. Once the ordinance is adopted, farmers will be able to apply to be in a voluntary agricultural district ordinance. To view a copy of the draft ordinance or find out more information about the proposed program, you may go to the following Planning and Development Department web site:

<http://www.co.catawba.nc.us/depts/planning/farms.htm>



UNIFOUR OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION TASK FORCE

Representatives from the Planning and Development Department are serving on the newly created Unifour Open Space and Recreation Task Force. The Task Force, staffed by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG), consists of planners, managers and representatives of special interest groups from the Unifour's cities, towns and counties. The goals of the Task Force are to review current open space and recreation opportunities in the region and determine how existing land use plans, in addition to current and long-range projects, can best be coordinated to provide for seamless open space opportunities.

A major accomplishment of the Task Force to date is the creation of a master recreation map for the Unifour region, which will be printed and distributed throughout the region. The map shows the location of all federal, state and local recreation opportunities along with facilities located at each site. Currently, information from this map can be accessed on the WPCOG's site where a user can search on a specific activity that they would like to do in the region, such as hiking, and the site will list those places where this can be done. The web site location is:

<http://www.wpcog.dst.nc.us/regionrec/database.asp>

The Task Force sponsored a regional workshop in spring 2002 where managers, planners, school facility representatives and recreation directors brainstormed on ways to fill gaps in recreation opportunities and how to fund the needs in the region.

In order to begin implementing some of the ideas identified in the workshop, the Task Force was divided into four subcommittees: trails, lake access areas/resources, regional green plan/tourism and wellness. County Planner, Mary George, is serving as co-chair of the lake access areas/resources subcommittee and Director of Planning, Jacky Eubanks, is participating in the green plan/tourism subcommittee. The lake access areas/resources subcommittee will be reviewing five broad initiatives over the next six months. They include:

- 1) Pursuing the designation of "Catawba River Trail" for the portion of the Catawba River flowing through the region.
- 2) Review Duke Power's access area initiative with local governments. This is an opportunity offered by Duke Power to local governments to enter into a local agreement with Duke Power to develop land holdings of Duke Power as public access areas.
- 3) Cooperate with the Catawba/Wateree Relicensing Coalition on the Federal relicensing of Duke Power's dams on the Catawba River.
- 4) Evaluate the opportunity for joint usage of school recreation facilities during evenings and weekends.
- 5) Identify facility needs in local governments' recreation plans.

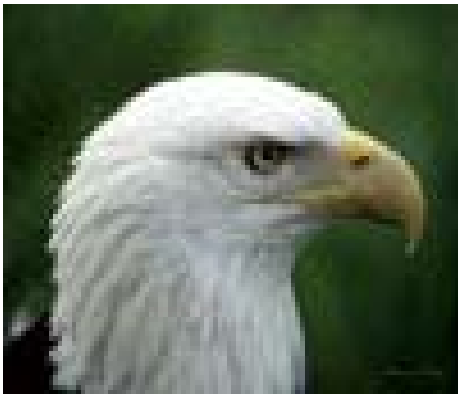
The green plan/tourism subcommittee is working on a regional green plan in addition to a guide for tourism.

Work with these subcommittees will continue into 2003.

NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Catawba County, in cooperation with the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, completed its natural heritage inventory in Spring 2002. The inventory resulted in a report which is the first systematic identification of the County's natural areas. The objectives were to identify and describe the most intact natural communities, including areas that provide important habitat to wildlife. This inventory was unique because it used birds as ecological indicators to help identify significant natural heritage areas. Potential sites for survey were initially identified by the Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina, with help from county planning staff, an advisory committee and other individuals knowledgeable about the county. Topographic maps and aerial photographs were used to select and prioritize areas for survey. The majority of fieldwork occurred during the spring and early summer of 2001. Follow-up fieldwork and the final published report were completed in spring 2002.

Eleven sites, encompassing approximately 3,143 acres, were identified as significant natural heritage areas during this inventory. Seven sites were wooded, riparian corridors along major streams and rivers. The other sites include an extensive mature forest (Bakers Mountain), a wetland area along Lyle Creek, an undeveloped shoreline of Lake Norman, and aquatic habitat in the upper Jacobs Fork River area. Of the eleven significant natural areas, Bakers Mountain, the Catawba River corridor, and the Jacobs Fork corridor are recommended for protection because of the size and quality of their natural communities and the critical habitats they provide rare and uncommon species. For example, two rare animal species were observed in the Catawba River corridor: the Bald Eagle and Eastern Woodrat.



Bald Eagle



Eastern Woodrat

A copy of the county's Natural Heritage Inventory is available for viewing in the Planning and Development Department. When developments are proposed in the areas identified in the report, staff will share this information with the developer and encourage them to use the County's cluster/open space subdivision option to preserve the sensitive areas within the property. Staff will also discuss other preservation opportunities, such as conservation easements.

HOUSING

Grant

The Scattered Sites Grant Program is designed to assist homeowners in Catawba County who are low-moderate income. The objective is to provide housing rehabilitation assistance as a first priority. Acquisition, clearance and administration are eligible activities. The County will receive a \$400,000 grant every three years on a non-competitive basis from the North Carolina Department of Commerce – Division of Community Assistance to address substandard housing. Catawba County has received a 2002-2003 grant and will be assisted by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments in administering the project.



Affordable Housing

The Faith Community Task Force on Poverty is comprised of various volunteer faith communities, non-profit and governmental social services, for the purpose of responding to the needs of people in poverty in the Catawba Valley. In 2002, a sub-committee of the task force was formed to assemble a guide to help with affordable housing issues in the County. Planning staff had the pleasure of working on the sub-committee and this year they completed the *Affordable Housing Guide of Catawba County*. This 19-page guide provides comprehensive information to assist people in achieving affordable housing in the County. Visit the Planning and Development Department for a copy of the Guide.

The Affordable Housing Guide Work Group received the 2002 Catawba County Team Award at the County Awards Night on October 24, 2002.

WORLD TOWN PLANNING DAY

The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) acting for the 14,000 members of the planning profession in America, a component of the 33,000-member American Planning Association, endorses World Town Planning Day. This allows an opportunity to promote a broad-based awareness, support, and advocacy of community and regional planning among the general public and all levels of government. November 8 of each year is celebrated as World Town Planning Day in about 30 countries on four continents. Catawba County began celebrating this event in 2001.

This year's celebration was a success in Catawba County. Planning staff was presented with a Proclamation by the Board of Commissioners recognizing World Town Planning Day in support of local planning efforts and recognizing professional and citizen planners. Staff sponsored an open house on November 8, 2002 showcasing past and current planning efforts.

On display were draft maps showing future land use recommendations from the Small Area Planning Districts, the County's current long-range planning initiative. Also on display was a PowerPoint presentation emphasizing the importance of smart growth as well as maps and documents pertaining to short-range activities including subdivision and other County Ordinances. A popular exhibit included recently approved cluster subdivision plans, which allowed overall lot density to be achieved while preserving a certain percentage of the site as permanent open space.

The municipalities of the County were invited to join in the displays. We were fortunate to have plans from the City of Conover as well as air quality and regional transportation displays from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments.

Approximately 50 people attended the event. Refreshments included a World Town Planning Day cake and soft drinks.



World Town Planning Day Open-House at the Catawba County Government Center



County Planner, Mary George, shows a group of students various maps on display

SUBDIVISION ACTIVITY

Major subdivisions, generally new subdivisions where new roads are proposed, are reviewed in a two-step process. The preliminary and/or sketch plan is reviewed by the Subdivision Review Board (SRB) and the final plan is an administrative process reviewed by planning staff. Minor and family subdivisions do not involve the construction of new roads and are reviewed in a one-step process by planning staff. Subdivisions with more than five lots fronting an existing State road are still major subdivisions by definition and therefore required to be reviewed by the SRB.

A notable highlight in subdivision development that took place last year was the adoption of the cluster subdivision design option. Cluster subdivisions allow the same number of lots to be developed as a traditional development, however a cluster development allows smaller lot sizes and requires a certain portion of the parcel to remain undeveloped as permanent open space. By not developing certain lands, overall community and environmental benefits will be realized. Examples of land for open space include: steep slopes where erosion is a risk, flood plain areas, and natural habitats for animals. Open space can be used for activities such as walkways, parks, and other amenities for the community. Both the community and the developer can realize the benefits of open space development. The community gains by preserving undeveloped land. The developer gains by achieving a maximum allowable density of lots while reducing the costs of infrastructure needed to service those lots.

In 2002, three cluster subdivisions were approved by the SRB: Pebble Bay, Woodside Park and Anchor Bay. They averaged 39% open space exceeding the County's 30% minimum requirement.

The following is a breakdown of subdivision activities for both the SRB and planning staff. The SRB met 10 times in 2002. They did not convene in March and December.

SRB Approvals

The SRB approved six (6) sketch plans, one (1) revised sketch plan and three (3) major preliminary plats for a total of 331 new lots. They also approved four (4) preliminary plan extensions containing 173 previously approved lots.

Administrative Approvals

Although final plat approval is not a SRB function, conditions placed on a subdivision at the preliminary SRB review directly affect final plat approvals. Planning staff approved 12 final plats for a total of 206 lots.

Planning staff also approved 185 plats that were "other than" major final plats, totaling 220 lots. These included plats for family/estate subdivisions, minor subdivisions and exempt from subdivision review plats that produce new lots. Also included were exempt from subdivision review plats that do not produce new building lots which include: revisions, recombination plats of existing lots, plats that are exempt from subdivision review, easements and boundary surveys.

The breakdown is as follows:

Family/Estate plats.....	49 plats with a total of 70 lots
Minor Plats.....	57 plats with a total of 119 lots
Exempt From Subdivision Plats with new lots.....	19 plats with a total of 40 lots
Exempt From Subdivision Plats without new lots....	61 plats

Performance Guarantees

The County has provisions for the posting of a performance guarantee in lieu of completion of all or part of required improvements prior to approval of final subdivision plats. During 2002, planning staff approved five performance guarantees totaling \$371,671, extended five totaling \$626,462 and released three for completed projects.

Manual of Practice

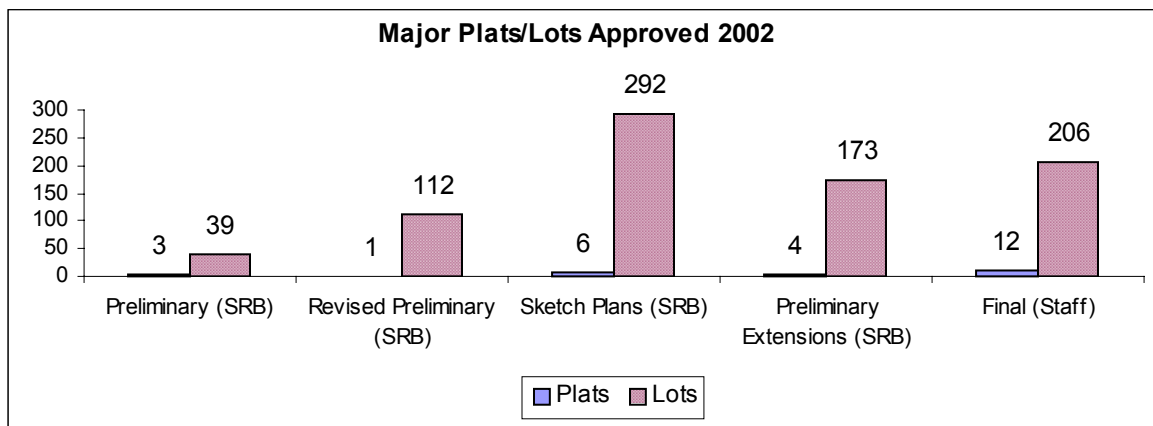
In 2002 an update to the *Catawba County Manual of Practice* was completed. This 43-page document is used in conjunction with the *Catawba County Subdivision Ordinance*. While the Subdivision Ordinance contains the legal regulations for subdividing property in the County, the Manual of Practice is a booklet that contains the administrative requirements to process a subdivision. Anyone going through the subdivision process should first obtain a copy of the *Catawba County Subdivision Ordinance* to determine the category of subdivision. The *Catawba County Manual of Practice* will be useful in obtaining the required certificates and forms needed to process the plan.

To view a copy of the *Manual of Practice* view the following Planning Department web site:

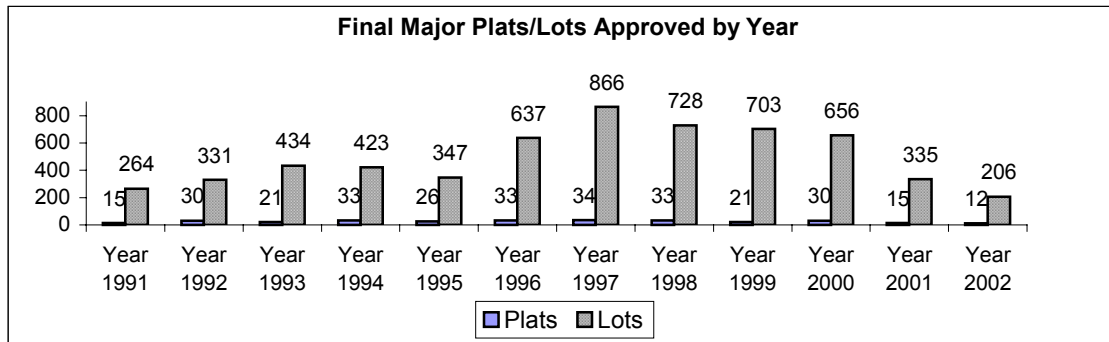
<http://www.co.catawba.nc.us/depts/planning/general/manual.pdf>

To view a copy of the *Subdivision Ordinance* view the following Planning Department web site:

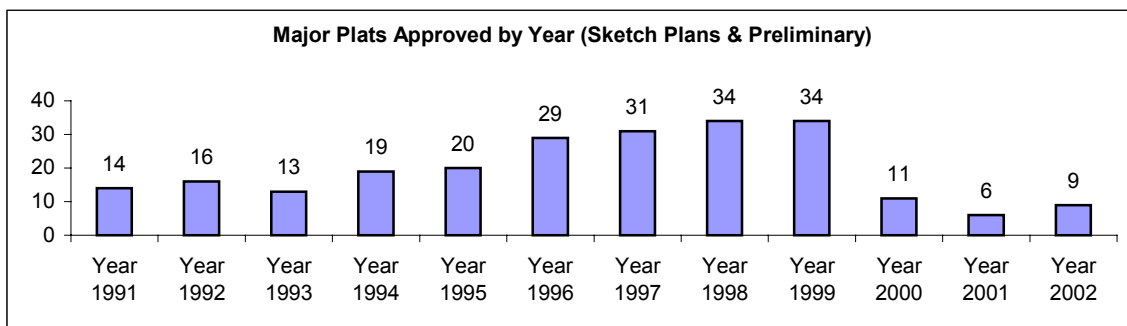
<http://www.co.catawba.nc.us/depts/planning/general/pdf/514.pdf>



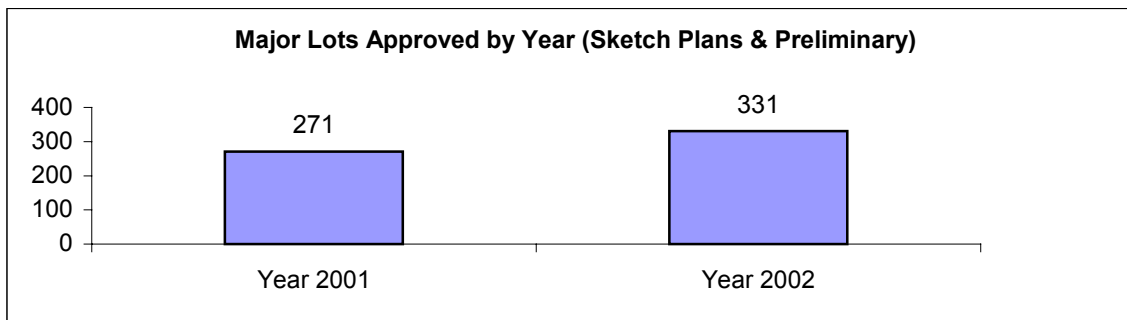
Major Plats/Lots Approved 2002		
Type	Plats	Lots
Preliminary (SRB)	3	39
Revised Preliminary (SRB)	1	112
Sketch Plans (SRB)	6	292
Preliminary Extensions (SRB)	4	173
Final (Staff)	12	206
Note: New lots counted when a Sketch Plan is approved. If no Sketch Plan is submitted, new lots are counted when Preliminary Plan is approved.		



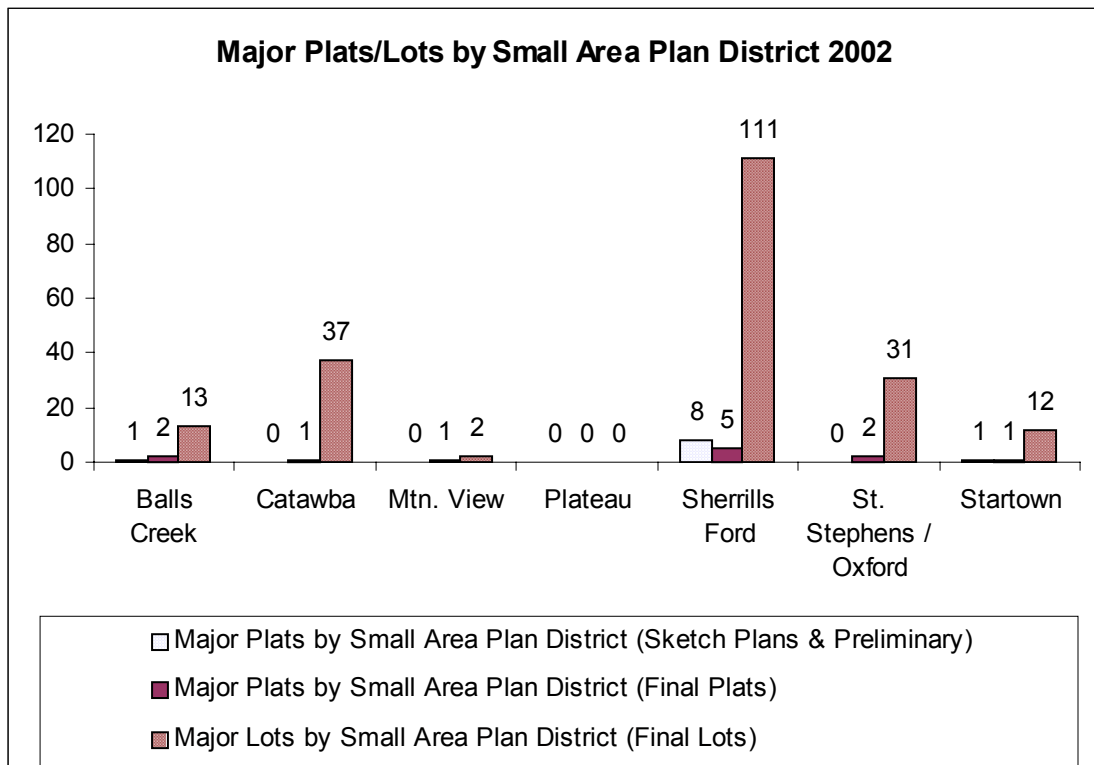
Final Major Plats/Lots Approved by Year		
Year	Plats	Lots
Year 1991	15	264
Year 1992	30	331
Year 1993	21	434
Year 1994	33	423
Year 1995	26	347
Year 1996	33	637
Year 1997	34	866
Year 1998	33	728
Year 1999	21	703
Year 2000	30	656
Year 2001	15	335
Year 2002	12	206



Major Plats Approved by Year (Sketch Plans & Preliminary)	Number
Year 1991	14
Year 1992	16
Year 1993	13
Year 1994	19
Year 1995	20
Year 1996	29
Year 1997	31
Year 1998	34
Year 1999	34
Year 2000	11
Year 2001	6
Year 2002	9

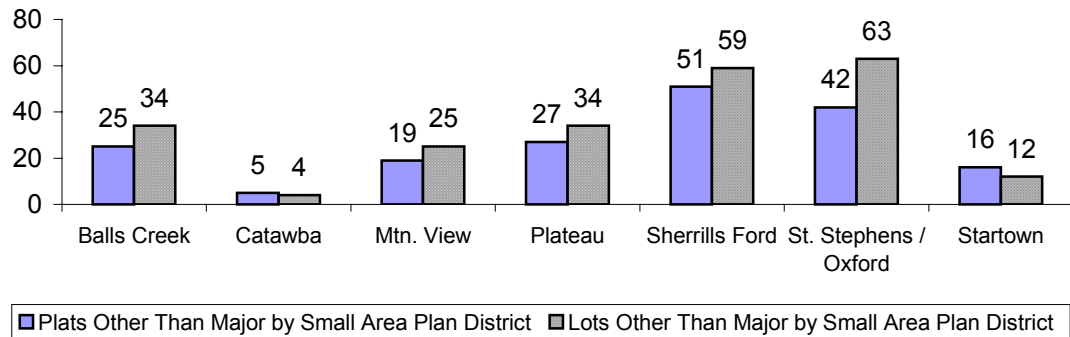


Major Lots Approved by Year (Sketch Plans & Preliminary)	Number
Year 2001	271
Year 2002	331



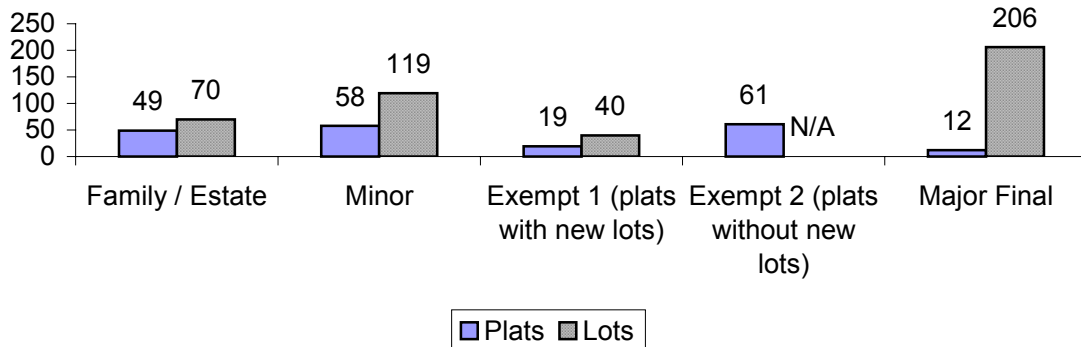
Small Area Plan District	Major Plats by Small Area Plan District (Sketch Plans & Preliminary)	Major Plats by Small Area Plan District (Final Plats)	Major Lots by Small Area Plan District (Final Lots)
Balls Creek	1	2	13
Catawba	0	1	37
Mtn. View	0	1	2
Plateau	0	0	0
Sherrills Ford	8	5	111
St. Stephens / Oxford	0	2	31
Startown	1	1	12

Plats/Lots Other Than Major by Small Area Plan District 2002



Small Area Plan District	Plats Other Than Major by Small Area Plan District	Lots Other Than Major by Small Area Plan District
Balls Creek	25	34
Catawba	5	4
Mtn. View	19	25
Plateau	27	34
Sherrills Ford	51	59
St. Stephens / Oxford	42	63
Startown	16	12
Note: Plats other than Major includes plats for Minor, Family, & Exempt 1 & Exempt 2		
Note: Lots other than Major includes lots created by Minor, Family, & Exempt 1 plats		

Total Plats/Lots Other Than Major 2002



Type	Plats	Lots
Family / Estate	49	70
Minor	58	119
Exempt 1 (plats with new lots)	19	40
Exempt 2 (plats without new lots)	61	N/A
Major Final	12	206
Exempt-1 (over 10 acre tracts, under 2 acre tract splits)		
Exempt-2 (Easement, r/w, survey, road disclosure, recombination, revision)		

REZONING ACTIVITY

The following rezoning cases reflect final action by the Board of Commissioners during 2002:

- John F. Hicks to rezone a 4.96 acre tract from C-2 Commercial to R-3 Residential. This property is located at 3423 S NC 127 Highway in Hickory, NC, Parcel ID 2791-18-20-7802. **Approved.**
- Graham Leroy Lail, Jr. and Lynn M. Lail to rezone a 0.59 acre tract, a 0.79 acre tract, and an approximately 4.00 acre portion of an existing 35.61 acre tract from R-2 Residential to C-2 Commercial. These properties are located at 3879, 3889, and 3857 Springs Road in Conover, NC, Parcel ID 734-13-12-2603, 3734-13-12-2682, and 3734-13-13-1923. **Approved.**
- Larry Wilkinson and Candy Wilkinson to rezone a 4.79 acre tract from R-2 Residential to C-2 Commercial. This property is located at 5515 E NC 150 Hwy. in Denver, NC, Parcel ID 3686-15-53-0253. **Approved.**
- Princeton Company, LLC to rezone a 0.91 acre tract from R-2 Residential to C-1 Commercial. This property is located at 9195 Sherrills Ford Road in Terrell, NC, Parcel ID 4617-09-15-4802. **Approved.**
- Douglas W. Rink to rezone a 1.447 acre **portion** of an existing 9.91 acre tract from C-1 Commercial to C-2 Commercial. This property is located at 6146 E NC 150 Hwy. in Denver, NC, Parcel ID 3696-05-19-8586. **Approved.**
- Charles F. Connor Jr. and Jean H. Connor to rezone a 2.99 acre tract and a portion of a 1.1 acre tract from R-2 Residential to C-1 Commercial. These properties are located at 9247 Sherrills Ford Road in Sherrills Ford, NC, Parcel ID 4617-09-15-5301 and 4617-09-15-8265. **Approved.**
- Laban William Helderman to rezone a 14.17-acre tract from R-2 Residential to Planned Development – Shopping Center Community District (PD-SC). This property is located at 4111 S NC 16 Hwy in Maiden, NC, Parcel ID 3678-03-02-9214 (and subsequently Parcel ID 3678-03-02-9214, after subdivided). **Approved.**
- James A. Schronce and Shirley S. Schronce to rezone a 9.15 acre tract and a 0.94 acre tract from R-2 Residential to E-2 Industrial. This property is located at 5830 N NC 16 Hwy and 2300 Recycling Road in Conover, NC; Parcel ID 3755-18-20-8570 and 3755-18-30-0896. **Denied.**

ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

The following Ordinance Amendments were approved by the Board of Commissioners during 2002:

- An amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow campground/recreational vehicle parks as a permitted use in the C-1 and C-2 Commercial District and deleting this use from the O-I Office Institutional District. Added standards for all campground/recreational vehicle parks developed in the C-2 Commercial District.
- An amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding pier regulations. This amendment deleted the projected lot line setback requirement for pier/dock facilities.
- Zoning ordinance amendments addressing wood waste grinding operations. These amendments allow staff approval for a permanent grinding operation in the C-2, E-1 and E-2 zoning districts and a temporary off-site grinding operation in all districts subject to standards. Temporary on-site grinding operations are permitted in all districts as a matter of right. Also, the amendments allow grinding operations in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts as a special use permit based on specific standards. The standards address buffering, hours of operation, setback of the machinery and materials, and minimum acreage.
- An amendment to Catawba County Code adding a section for a Wireless Telecommunications Ordinance, which replaces the existing telecommunications regulations. This ordinance regulates all proposed wireless telecommunications towers, modifications and co-locations located in Catawba County's zoning jurisdiction.
- An amendment to the Subdivision Ordinance adding the language for public roads; "Where a road has been offered for public dedication, that offer may not be withdrawn from public dedication without prior review and approval from the Catawba County Subdivision Review Board."

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT ACTIVITY

The Catawba County Board of Adjustment held ten meetings between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2002. The following cases reflect final action by the Board.

Special Use:

- A special use request of Mark Ikerd Grading & Hauling, Inc./Walter Stephen Ikerd for a special use permit to operate a wood waste grinding operation-permanent in an R-2 Residential District. This 14.562-acre tract is located at 3894 54th Ave NE, Hickory, Parcel ID 3735-10-46-9488 & 3735-10-46-7182. **Denied.**
- A special use request of John C. & Rosemary Bass Young for a 5/70 bonus permit in the WS II - Protected Watershed District. This 7.10 acre tract of land is zoned C-1 Commercial and located at 8437 W NC 10 Hwy, Parcel ID 2677-01-36-8234. **Approved.**
- A special use request of Rodney and Hope Ward to operate a landscaping business in the R-2 Residential District. This 2.75-acre tract is located at 3601 Ward Dr, Parcel ID 3617-01-27-0521. **Approved.**
- A special use request of Mark Ikerd Grading & Hauling Inc. to operate a land clearing and inert debris landfill in the R-2 Residential District. This 11.21-acre tract of land is located at 3894-54th Av N.E., Hickory, Parcel ID 3735-10-46-9488. **Approved.**
- A special use request of Oxford Fire Department to construct and operate a public use facility/fire department in the R-2 Residential District. This 5.6-acre tract of land is located at 5670 N NC 16 Hwy, Parcel ID 3754-06-39-7138. **Approved.**
- A special use request of Adult Life Programs, Inc/Catawba Valley Baptist Church to operate an adult day care facility in the R-2 Residential District. This 6.02-acre tract of land is located at 3390 Shepherd Rd, Parcel ID 3666-01-49-0898. **Approved.**
- A special use request of Tony and Betty Yocum to expand an existing breeding kennel and a variance request to reduced the side setbacks for the kennel than the required 300-ft and a reduced acreage of 9.37-acres instead of the required 10-acre minimum lot size. This property is zoned R-2 Residential and located at 3792 Buffalo Shoals Rd, Parcel ID 3667-04-62-2636. **Denied.**
- A special use request of Laban Helderman for a 5/70 bonus permit in the WS II-Protected Watershed District to develop a Planned Development -Shopping Center Community. This 14.17 acre tract of land is zoned R-2 Residential and located at 4111 S NC 16 Hwy, Parcel ID 3678-03-02-9214. **Approved.**

Special Use:

- A modification of special use permit to add a tennis and basketball court to the existing community recreational use of White Dove Estates. This property is zoned R-2 Residential and located along Lynmore Drive, Parcel ID 4609-04-730743 & 4609-04-732405. **Approved.**
- A special use request from SBA Network Services, Inc and William R. Lutz, Jr. to construct a 180 ft. tall telecommunications tower in the R-2 Residential District. This 33.61-acre tract is located at 2375 Settlemyre Bridge Road, Parcel ID 3720-07-58-7396. **Denied.**
- A special use request of Harold Eugene Wesson to be able to operate a nursery/landscaping business in the R-2 Residential District. This 20.75 acres tract of land is zoned R-2 Residential and located at 361 E NC 10 Highway, Parcel ID 3760-11-57-9344. **Approved.**

Extension of Nonconforming Use:

- An extension of nonconforming use request of Hallman's Greenhouse to be able to add one 96-ft by 28-ft greenhouse and one 95-ft by 28-ft greenhouse to their existing nursery business. This 1.34-acre tract of land is zoned R-2 Residential and located at 4460 County Home Road, Parcel ID 3233-10-47-5084. **Approved.**
- An extension of nonconforming use request of Steve Hairfield to add a 35 ft by 69 ft storage facility to his existing concrete product manufacturing business and a variance to allow a rear setback of 20 ft. instead of the required 30 ft. rear setback in the R-2 Residential District. This 1.77-acre tract of land is located at 1595 Prison Camp Road, Parcel ID 3648-07-68-5832. **Approved.**

Change of Nonconforming Use:

- A change of nonconforming use request of Alfred Moss/Long Island Marine Construction to change the use of this property from a convenience store to a sales office for his pier/dock business with display area. This .5-acre tract of land is zoned R-2 Residential and located at 7779 Hudson Chapel Road, Parcel ID 4701-04-73-6788. **Approved.**

Variance:

- A rear setback variance request from James M. Harper, builder and property owner Joseph F. Campany to have a 22.9-ft rear setback instead of the required 30-ft rear setback in the R-2 Residential District. This property is located at 2260 Northview Harbour Drive, Parcel ID 4629-03-00-8037. **Approved.**
- A front setback variance request of Bo of North Carolina, Inc. to have a 26.73-ft front setback on the northwest corner of dwelling instead of the required 30-ft front setback in the R-2 Residential District. This property is located at 7529 Lanyards End, Parcel ID 4607-02-59-0079. **Approved.**
- A variance request from Paul A. & Johanne E. Duffin for a setback variance of 14.1-ft. on the northeast corner of the existing dwelling instead of the required 15-ft. side setback in the R-2 Residential District. This tract of land is located at 6121 Rest Home Road, Parcel ID 3755-04-64-0372. **Approved.**
- A variance request of Frederick H. Thomas to construct an addition to his dwelling to be used as a carport with a side setback of 6 feet instead of the required 12 feet side setback in the R-1 Residential District. This property is located at 7889 Tradwinds Drive, Parcel ID 4606-02-85-7430. **Denied.**
- A variance request of Don Hartsoe and Scott Davis to have a 7.86 side setback on the southeast corner of dwelling and a 10 ft. side setback on the southwest corner of dwelling instead of the required 12 ft. side setback in the R-1 Residential District. This .64-acre tract of land is located at 7821 Sail Pointe Drive, Parcel ID 4607-19-71-1422. **Approved.**
- A variance request of Steve Hairfield to allow a rear setback of 20 ft. instead of the required 30 ft. rear setback in the R-2 Residential District. This 1.77-acre tract of land is located at 1595 Prison Camp Road, Parcel ID 3648-07-68-5832. **Approved.**

Zoning Map Correction:

- Correction to the official zoning atlas as it relates to property located at 8629 and 8693 E. NC 150 Hwy in the Mountain Creek Township from R-2 Residential to C-3 Commercial. **Approved.**

ZONING ACTIVITY

Permits Issued 2002:

Single-Family Dwellings	424
Modulars	36
Duplex	4
Doublewide - New Setup	138
Doublewide - Change Out	38
Singlewide - New Setup	47
Singlewide - Change Out	31
Pre-1976 manufactured home - New Setup	0
Pre-1976 manufactured home - Change Out	0
Doublewide not meeting appearance criteria - New setup	2
Doublewide not meeting appearance criteria - Change Out	0
Singlewide not meeting appearance criteria - New Setup	7
Singlewide not meeting appearance criteria - Change Out	16
Non-Residential - New	17
Non-Residential - Addition	11
Piers	144
Signs	7
Home Occupation	7
Accessory Structures	156
Additions - Residential Structure	158
Additions - Accessory Structure	3
Temporary Mobile Home Permits	5
Tower - New Setup	1
Tower - Co-Location	3

Code Enforcement Complaints:

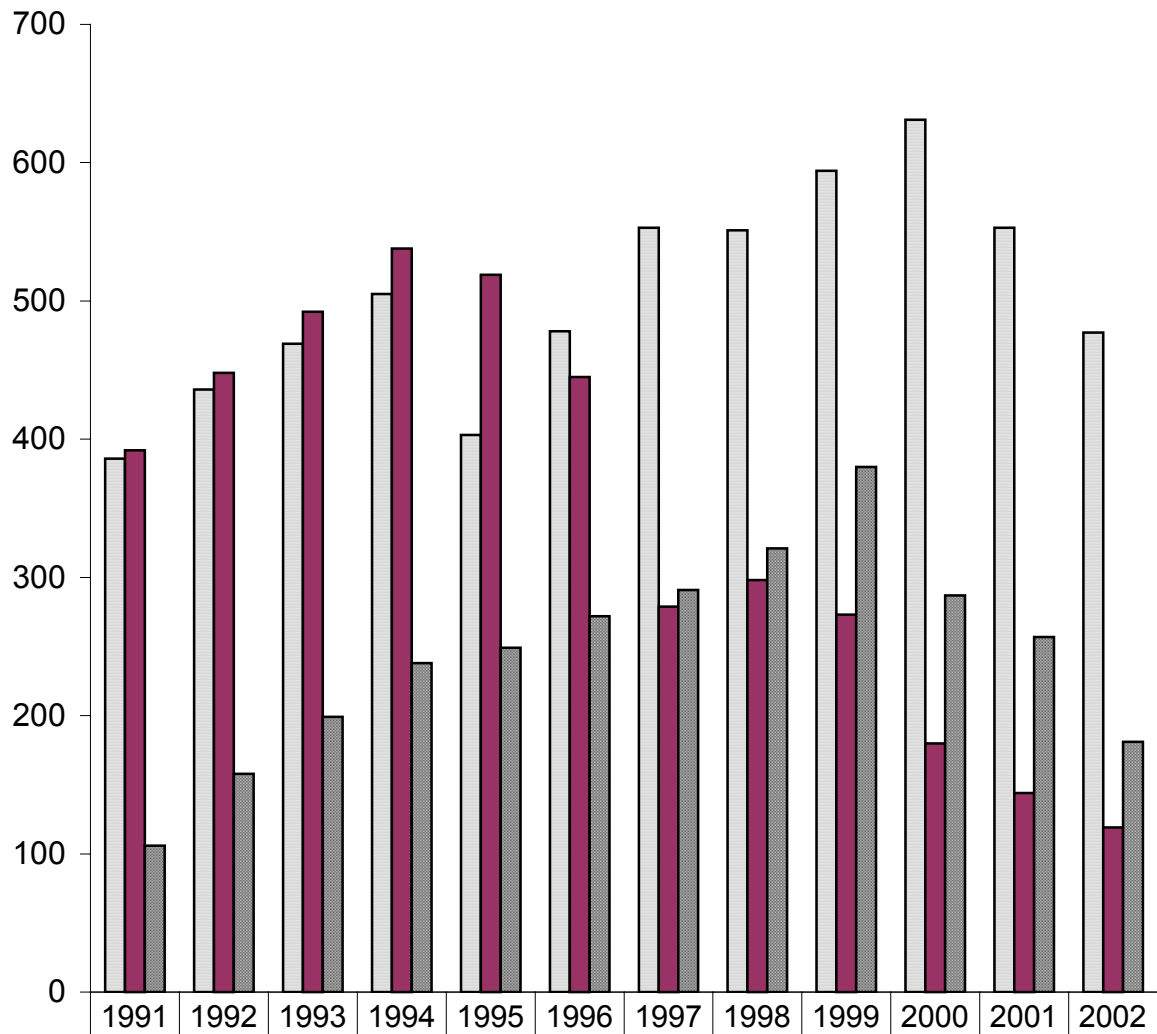
Junk Vehicles:

Received	168
Investigated	168
Corrected	134
Pending	135
Referred to Sheriff	10
Site Visit Follow Up	139

Zoning:

Received	58
Investigated	57
Corrected	41
Pending	189
Referred to Legal	2
Site Visit Follow Up	27

Residential Zoning Permits Countywide by Building Type 1991-2002



□ Stick Built	386	436	469	505	403	478	553	551	594	631	553	477
■ Singlewides	392	448	492	538	519	445	279	298	273	180	144	119
■ Doublewides	106	158	199	238	249	272	291	321	380	287	257	181